California Department of Education Jack O'Connell, State Superintendent of Public Instruction



A Newsletter for California Educational Leaders

A Message from the Superintendent

The Legislature's education committees have begun hearings on bills to implement my High Performing High School Initiative. This initiative will be one of my major focuses this year. The goal over the next few years is to vastly increase opportunities for all high school students by fully preparing them for success in college, vocational training, or the workplace.

Volume 3, Issue 3 June 2004

Feature Article:

Superintendent's High Performing High School Initiative

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Conference 14 Calendar I am asking for broad support from educators, businesses, parents, students, and communities in addressing this critically important goal.

The High Performing High School Initiative, first outlined in my State of Education address in February, aims to give schools greater flexibility over spending in return for a strong focus on successful practices for raising student achievement. The initiative was developed after extensive discussions with the field.

My initiative would begin a process of fundamental change in our high schools by implementing high expectations for all students, including mandatory course work in the "a-g" requirements for admission to the University of California or California State University systems; improving professional development for teachers and site administrators; developing world-class instructional materials; making smooth transitions from middle school and to higher education and the workplace; and creating a community of support for high achievement in high schools.

For more information, I invite you to read about the initiative on our Web site at http://www.cde.ca.gov/stateofeducation. I will be posting updates as this initiative moves through the Legislature.

The future of our economy, the quality of our communities, and the success of our children depend on creating a culture of high achievement in our high schools. Higher expectations will help close the achievement gap and create more opportunities for all students. I hope you will support me in this important effort to improve opportunities for all of California's high school students. Thank you.

JACK O'CONNELL

Highlight Site: River City High School

School Profile

Student Ethnicity:

Asian—13%

Filipino—2%

African American—5%

American Indian—2%

Latino/Hispanic—35%

White (includes native Russian)—43%

City: West Sacramento
Community: Urban
County: Yolo

Per Capita Income: \$15,245*
Median Household Income: \$31,718*

District: Washington Unified

Grade Levels: 9-12 **2003-04 Enrollment:** 1,621

2003 API Growth: 638 (growth = 67) **Students on Free/Reduced Lunch:** 48%

2002 API Base: 571 English Language Learners: 20%

2002 API Growth: 595 (growth = 02)

2001 API Base: 593

API Growth for Socioeconomically Disadvantaged Students: 66 points*

API Growth for Latino/Hispanic Students: 77 points*

API Growth for Asian Students: 104 points* 2004 CAHSEE Math Pass Rate: 80%1*

2004 CAHSEE English/language arts Pass Rate: 71.3%1*

Student Population Qualifying for CSU/UC: 16%*

2003 Adequate Yearly Progress: Yes - made annual measurable objectives and participation rate

Graduation Rate: 82%^{2*} Dropout Rate: 1.6%^{2*}

Not all data verified by the California Department of Education

River City High School (RCHS) has experienced a tremendous amount of growth in its overall Academic Performance Index (API) score this past year. This phenomenon may be especially attributed to the improved API scores of three significant subgroups of students—socioeconomically disadvantaged, Latino/Hispanic, and Asian. In addition, more RCHS students are passing the *California High School Exit Examination* (CAHSEE). These gains are due, in part, to the many strategies implemented through the Immediate Intervention/Underperforming Schools Program (II/USP) and to the hard work of the students and staff. Some of these strategies are noted below.

 Purchase of standards-based textbooks and supplementary curriculum materials: Over the past four years new materials have been purchased, and teachers have been trained in their use. Having the right materials in the hands of students has had a direct impact on the teachers' abilities to teach the California academic content standards.

^{*}Additional Data Provided by River City High School

¹ Reflects 2004 census testing only; 92% of sophomores were tested in math and 99% of sophomores were tested in English/language arts.

² Reflects a three-year average (2001, 2002, 2003) of graduation and dropout rates, respectively.

- Intervention programs: New interventions to assist struggling students have been implemented: Corrective Reading, a PLATO Reading Lab, Reading Counts, Accelerated Math, Math Lab classes, CAHSEE prep classes, Credit Recovery classes, Cyber High online classes, and double-blocked classes for students in the lowest levels of reading and math.
- Alignment of the curriculum to standards: Teachers have worked hard to align their entire
 curriculum to meet the California academic content standards. Many departments have
 accomplished this by rewriting courses of study, engaging in backward-mapping activities,
 sharing resources, and establishing common timelines and curriculum. Through curriculum
 calibration and analysis of student work, teachers assess student achievement of standards
 and attainment of grade-level skills across the curricula.
- Common benchmarks and assessments: Many departments, especially English and math, have worked to create benchmarks and assessments that are used department-wide at particular grade levels. These assessments are then used to modify the curriculum and instructional strategies. Efforts have also been made to articulate with the feeder middle school in creating common benchmarks and assessments—particularly in math.
- Ongoing data analysis: Data are used as tools to help reach the desired outcomes.
 Statewide test score data (e.g., California Standards Test, California Achievement Test (Sixth Edition) CAHSEE, California English Language Development Test), site-level assessments (common assessments, Gates-McGinty, etc.), as well as outcome data (graduation rate, rate of high school students eligible to apply to a University of California and California State University, attendance rate, etc.) are used to analyze the students' and school's progress and make changes if necessary.
- Student support: Many strategies are employed to support all students in learning. After-school funds enable specialized after-school tutoring programs in math and English for all students, including English-language learners and special education students. A peer-mentoring program has been instituted in conjunction with our Link Crew program and is targeted to ninth-grade students who are falling behind and not achieving at least a 2.0 grade point average. AVID (Advancement Via Individual Determination) and EAOP (Early Academic Outreach Programs) help underrepresented students gain access to higher education opportunities. Advanced Placement classes are offered for students who would like to experience an even more rigorous curriculum.
- Career Partnership Academy: RCHS has an Engineering, Science, and Technology
 Academy that is a national model for such tech prep programs. Teachers and students work
 collaboratively to support the entire program. Through many partnerships (e.g., Intel, Air
 Resources Board, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers), the school is able to offer its students a
 host of hands-on opportunities to apply knowledge in the real world through field trips,
 internships, mentoring programs, and job shadowing. The academy is open to all students.
 The academy students are consistently among the top-achieving students at the school.

The staff members at RCHS believe these strategies, programs, and student support structures have improved student learning and achievement. RCHS continues to improve. By working collaboratively and focusing on our students' needs, RCHS is making a difference.

By Mort Geivett, Principal, mgeivett@wusd.k12.ca.us, and Shelley Alton, WASC Coordinator, salton@wusd.k12.ca.us, River City High School

Transition to High School



The Transition to High School Program Works for Vanessa Montanez.

Vanessa Montanez is direct in telling people why she has to repeat eighth grade. "I found out how to skip [school], and I got into a fight before the end of the school year. My grades were bad, even in P.E. [physical education]. Why didn't I do the work? I thought I was too good for it, so I never did it. I just didn't do anything." Montanez says she simply did not care, did not fit in, and was having family problems.

The turning point came during a meeting with school administrators and her mother. Montanez says there were a lot of tears when she admitted to her mother everything she was doing. So when she ended up at Grant Joint Unified High School District's Transition to High School, she vowed to be honest with herself and everyone else. "When I first came down here, I decided to buckle down," she says. "I decided to listen to my teachers, not talk in class, and behave. I'm doing really well now. I'm proud of myself. I'm trying to get straight As."

Grant's Transition to High School program is "a special program for what some people affectionately call 'eighth and a halfers,'" says lead teacher Rachel Thoene. "They're eighth graders who are repeating the eighth grade because, for a variety of reasons, they didn't make it through the first time.

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Transition to High School - Continued

It could be academics, behavior, attendance issues, or all of them. Transition to High School is (in its second year) specifically tailored to the needs of those students to help them make up what they were lacking academically and to give them new skills to help them succeed when they do get into high school." Potential students are identified midway through their eighth grade year through test scores and teacher/principal referrals. Students are identified for summer school enrollment and monitored. Students in the Transition to High School are taken from the summer school group that needs additional services.

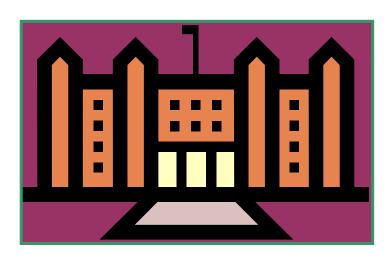
Transition to High School is certainly not a traditional classroom. There are four periods, three teachers, and about 60 students who arrive by bus from all over the district. All students take a reading and vocabulary skills class during first period. They attend standards-based courses (including a focus on *CAHSEE* standards)—a math class, a language arts class, and a computer class. The day ends at 12:30 p.m. for them.

Thoene says that although the day is shorter than that of a regular high school, it is also intense and extremely focused. "This is an incredibly energetic group of students. What we find is that they're all extremely bright and they come to us not only with individual problems and issues, but with individual gifts and talents. When we develop a relationship with the students and figure out what those gifts and talents are, we can capitalize on those things and turn them into successes. We help students create new habits and new skills for themselves. It's exhausting for about the first three months of school because we're retraining them. We're getting rid of old habits that got them into trouble, and then we're creating new habits. Issues of respect for authority figures, respect for their peers, and respect for themselves have to become first priority. And once we establish that, they get on track. But it can be a rough transition in the beginning because they don't want to be here."

Before long students will graduate from Transition to High School and make their way to the comprehensive high schools. Students are evaluated and placed in programs that best suit their needs, such as intervention or college preparation. Montanez says she wants to surround herself with positive people, because she does not want to fall into the bad habits that got her into trouble in the first place.

For more information about the Transition to High School program, please contact Principal Michael Crosetti at 916-570-0131.

Edited and reprinted with permission from Grant Unified School District. Originally published in *Grant Today*, February 2004 by Zenobia Gerald.



Lompoc High School: Under New Leadership

Lompoc High School, a school of approximately 1,600 located in Santa Barbara County, recently recruited a new, first-time principal. The "new" principal, Art Diaz, has more than 18 years of experience in administration—he formerly served as a vice principal at both the middle and high school levels. Much of his experience has been obtained at sites designated as underperforming. With his assistance, one of these underperforming schools was later selected as a California Distinguished School. As administrator turnover continues to increase in California, first-time principals have become more prevalent. Diaz shares a first-time principal's perspective on the challenges to be expected and some ways to address those challenges.

Diaz warns that changing the status quo is never easy but suggests that principals may want to begin their new role by reviewing all programs of the school and determining whether to continue them. Principals should see the "big picture" and decide whether the program relates to the site's established goals. The following questions need to be considered when a principal decides whether to continue programs:

- 1. Why do we have the program?
- 2. Who is the program serving?
- 3. Is the program effective?

The answers to these questions may suggest that a program not only should continue but possibly be expanded. Space Technology and Robotics (STAR) is an established program that appears to be working. This project-based program promotes mathematics, science, and engineering skills through robotics design. The school sometimes partners with staff from the nearby Vandenberg Air Force Base to assist students with their projects.

Diaz notes that those considering a position as principal should possess courage and stamina. He notes that principals should "have a positive, encouraging attitude; and be prepared to take on a wide variety of administrative issues and duties. Honesty and attention to the needs of others go a long way in establishing staff rapport."

School Success for the New Principal

The following tips may be helpful to new principals:

- Planning—Have a coordinated plan that includes curriculum/instruction strategies, rituals and routines for students, and resource allocation based on school goals and needs.
- Teacher Expectations/Support—Provide opportunities for teachers to experience and document success. Expect teachers to provide all students with what they need to perform at or above grade level.
- School Culture/Community Expectations—Promote the importance of education in making life choices.
- Safety—Be proactive rather than reactive when it comes to making the campus and environment a safe place for students and staff.

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Lompoc High School — Continued

Diaz's last piece of advice is to establish an ongoing media connection. It will go a long way in generating good press and promoting a positive school image to the parents and community members. Lompoc High has used the innovative approach of paying a stipend to a local teacher, who is retired from the district, to write and submit school news articles to the local media.

For additional information about Lompoc High, please contact Art Diaz at 805-735-5606.

By Joyce Hinkson, CDE, Data Management Division, ihinkson@cde.ca.gov

School Profile

District: Lompoc Unified County: Santa Barbara Grade Levels: 9-12 Enrollment: 1,688

2003 API: 624 (growth = 39) **2002 API Base: 585**

2002 API: 605 (growth = 6) **2001 API Base: 599**

Community: Rural

Socio-economically disadvantaged: 47%

English Language Learners: 19%

Student Ethnicity: African-American—6%

American Indian—1%

Asian—5% Filipino—1%

Latino/Hispanic—51%

White-35%

CAHSEE Update

This school year all tenth-grade students were required to take the *California High School Exit Examination* (CAHSEE). School districts had the option to provide the exam to all tenth-grade students in either February or March and provide a make-up administration in either March or May. Student score reports arrive in district offices approximately ten weeks after students take the exam. In March the California Department of Education (CDE) released an assistance packet for schools and districts to use in providing examination results to parents and students. Aggregate results of the 2003-04 *CAHSEE* administered at the school, district, county, and state levels will be posted this fall.

Last November districts received copies of the *CAHSEE Study Guides* for each tenth-grade student. The guides are also posted on the CAHSEE Web site at http://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/tg/hs. If funds are available, the *CAHSEE Study Guides* will be reprinted for next school year's tenth-grade students.

In March CDE released the 2004 *CAHSEE Teacher Guides* for mathematics and English-language arts. The guides were posted to the CAHSEE Web site, and in April, each district received a master copy of each guide. The 2004 edition of the guides reflect the changes made to the CAHSEE blueprints in July 2003 and include the new test questions.

Please visit the CAHSEE Web site for further details or contact the CAHSEE Office at 916-445-9449.

By Jessica Valdez, Consultant, CAHSEE Office, jvaldez@cde.ca.gov

2004 Model Continuation High Schools

Consistent with his call to improve achievement for all high school students, State Superintendent of Public Instruction Jack O'Connell named 21 California schools as 2004 model continuation high schools on April 15.

"My High Performing High School Initiative is focused on implementing high expectations for all students, whether they choose to go on to college or straight to a career," O'Connell said. "These 21 schools serve as excellent examples for other continuation high schools that may want to follow their instructional strategies. Model continuation high schools ensure that students with diverse needs succeed in school and are supported in seeking better job opportunities or college."

The California Department of Education's (CDE's) continuation education program has been an option since 1919 for those students in need of more flexible school schedules, with an emphasis on vocational or career goals. This program is designed to meet the needs of students ages sixteen through eighteen who have not graduated from high school, are not exempt from compulsory school attendance, and are deemed at risk of not completing their schooling. More than 68,000 California high school students attended 522 continuation high schools in 2002-03.

Schools applying for model school designation must demonstrate excellence in program effectiveness, school management, curriculum, instructional strategies, assessment and evaluation, education climate, and guidance and counseling. Parents, students, and community members also submit narrative statements supporting their respective schools. A review team visits finalist schools before recommending them to O'Connell for model school status.

The CDE works in partnership with the California Continuation Education Association to identify model continuation high schools. Chosen schools retain their title for five years. The 21 schools named will join 87 previously designated schools. For more information on continuation education, please visit http://www.cde.ca.gov/spbranch/essdiv/conted_index.html. For more information about the California Continuation Education Association, please visit http://www.cceanet.org/.

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2004 MODEL CONTINUATION HIGH SCHOOLS — Continued Model Continuation High Schools

County	School District	School
Humboldt	Eureka City Unified	Humboldt Bay High School
Imperial	Calexico Unified	Aurora High School
Kern	Kern Union High	Nueva High School
Kings	Hanford Joint Union High	Earl F. Johnson High School
Los Angeles	Bonita Unified	Chaparral High School
	Palos Verdes Peninsula Unified	Rancho del Mar High School
	Rowland Unified	Santana High School
Merced	Merced Union High	Yosemite High School
Orange	Tustin Unified	Hillview High School
Sacramento	Grant Joint Union High I	Pacific Career & Technology High
		School
San Bernardino	Hesperia Unified	Mojave High School
San Luis Obispo	Lucia Mar Unified	Lopez High School
Santa Barbara	Lompoc Unified	Maple High School
Santa Clara	Mountain View/Los Altos Union High	Alta Vista High School
	Milpitas Unified	Calaveras Hills High School
	Santa Clara Unified	New Valley High School
Solano	Travis Unified	Travis Education Center
Sonoma	West Sonoma County Union High	Laguna High School
San Diego	Vista Unified	Alta Vista High School
	San Diego Unified	Garfield High School
Ventura	Moorpark Unified	Community High School



Counselor's Corner

SPARC Awards

Fifty-six California high schools recently received a Support Personnel Accountability Report Card (SPARC) award. "Academy Awards" and the "Best in the West" recognition awards were made at the California Association for School Counselors (CASC) annual conferences on April 23 in northern California and April 30 in southern California. These awards are based on each school's submission of a Support Personnel Accountability Report Card. The SPARC program and awards are a joint effort of the CDE and the Los Angeles County Office of Education.

The process of creating a SPARC requires support services staff to take a careful look at their current school counseling program. The goal is to develop and publish a public document that is user-friendly and accessible on the Web. The SPARC addresses four general areas:

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COUNSELOR'S CORNER: SPARC Awards - Continued

- Implementing the American School Counseling Association's national standards and National Model for School Counseling Programs
- Preparing a self-evaluation of a school counseling program
- Preparing reports for accreditation, grants, or awards
- Promoting the program to school administration and parents/guardians

Eighty-eight student support programs from 12 counties submitted their 2003-2004 SPARCs for Academy Award consideration. The first private school received an Academy Award this year. Recipient high schools are listed on the following tables. Names of middle and elementary recipients may be viewed at www.lacoe.edu/ccla/.

For a complete list of the student support programs that submitted SPARCs this year or for more information on how to get started on a SPARC, please go to www.lacoe.edu/ccla. Special thanks go to our SPARC scorers—the 40 support personnel professionals and graduate student volunteers.

By Bob Tyra, Consultant, Counseling and Guidance, Los Angeles County Office of Education, Tyra_Bob@lacoe.edu

Best in the West Recipients These recipient schools have maintained their SPARC at the Academy Award level for three years.		
County	School District	School
Los Angeles	Arcadia Unified School District	Arcadia High School
	Baldwin Park Unified School District	Baldwin Park High School
		Sierra Vista High School
	Centinela Valley Union High School District	Hawthorne High School
		Lawndale High School
	Covina-Valley Unified School District	Northview High School
	Rowland Unified School District	Nogales High School
		Santana Continuation High School
	West Covina Unified School District	West Covina High School
Orange	Brea Olinda Unified School District	Brea Olinda High School
Sacramento	Elk Grove Unified School District	Laguna Creek High School

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COUNSELOR'S CORNER: SPARC Awards - Continued

2003-04 Academy Award Recipients		
County	School District	School
Los Angeles	Alhambra City Unified School District	Alhambra High School
	Antelope Valley Joint Union High School District	Palmdale High School
		Quartz Hill High School
	Baldwin Park Unified School District	North Park High School
	Centinela Valley Union High School District	Leuzinger High School
	La Canada Unified School District	La Canada High School
	Las Virgenes Unified School District	Agoura High School
	Long Beach Unified School District	California Academy of Mathematics and Science
		Lakewood High School
		Long Beach Polytechnic
		Milikan High School
		Wilson Classical High School
	Los Angeles Unified School District	Venice High School
	Rowland Unified School District	Rowland High School
	West Covina Unified School District	Coronado Alternative School
Placer	Roseville Joint Union High School District	Granite Bay High School
San Bernardino	Chaffey Joint Union High School District	Los Osos High School
	Chino Valley Unified School District	Chino Hills High School
	Colton Joint Unified School District	Colton High School
	Snowline Joint Unified School District	Serrano High School
	Upland Unified School District	Upland High School
San Diego	Grossmont Union High School District	El Cajon Valley
Santa Cruz	Pajaro Valley Unified School District	Aptos High School
Sonoma	Santa Rosa City Schools	Montgomery High School
	(Private School)	Santa Rosa Christian School (K-12)
Tehama	Corning Union High School District	Corning Union High School

Continued on Page 12.

COUNSELOR'S CORNER: SPARC Awards – Continued

Certificate of Commendation Recipients		
County	School District	School
Los Angeles	Centinela Valley Union High School District	Lloyde High School
	Covina-Valley Unified School District	South Hills High School
	El Monte Union High School District	Arroyo High School
		El Monte High School
		Mountain View High School
		Rosemead High School
		South El Monte High School
	Long Beach Unified School District	Cabrillo High School
		Renaissance High School for the Arts
		Reid Continuation High School
	Los Angeles Unified School District	Sylmar High School
		Taft High School
	Montebello Unified School District	Montebello High School
	Pasadena Unified School District	Pasadena High School
	Temple City Unified School District	Temple City High School
	Long Beach Unified School District	Avalon School (K-12 school)
Madera County	Chawanakee Unified School District	Chawanakee Academy (K-12 school)
Marin County	Tamalpais Union High School District	Tamalpais High School



Funding Opportunities

Alternative Education Outreach Consultant (Dropout Recovery) Grant

The Alternative Education Outreach Consultant (AEOC) Program is a dropout recovery program that is located at a continuation high school, adult school, or other alternative site. Funds are intended for the sole use of hiring a dropout prevention specialist (DPS). The DPS identifies and provides services to high-risk students and their families.

Priority for funding will be given to school districts implementing a pupil motivation and maintenance program. Applications are due on June 30, 2004. For online information visit the CDE Web site http://www.cde.ca.gov/fg/fo/profile.asp?id=444&recID=444.



Worth a Click

NCLB Teacher Requirement Resource Guide

The California Department of Education has published the *NCLB Teacher Requirement Resource Guide* in an effort to clarify the federal requirements of providing highly qualified teachers for all students by the end of the 2005-2006 school year. The guide contains the steps needed to help teachers meet the requirements, options for demonstrating subject-matter competence in core subjects, and resources to assist districts/schools with further compliance. http://www.cde.ca.gov/nclb/sr/tq/documents/nclbresourceguide.pdf

Reading and Writing Improvement e-Newsletter

A new quarterly publication from the Council of Chief State School Officers focuses on efforts at the state and at the district level to strengthen the quality of reading and writing instruction and improve students' literacy skills. A particular focus is high poverty, low-performing schools. The newsletter provides links to recent reports, studies, legislative action, and news articles relating to reading and writing instruction and student achievement.

http://www.ccsso.org/content/pdfs/RWNewsletterSpring04.pdf

Breaking Ranks II

A follow-up to the 1996 report *Breaking Ranks: Changing an American Institution, Breaking Ranks II* engages principals, teacher leaders, and the entire school community in reforming the American high school into an academically rigorous, personalized learning environment that is improved through collaborative leadership. *Breaking Ranks I* presented a vision of a dramatically different high school for the twenty-first century; *Breaking Ranks II* goes further by outlining tested strategies for positive change that have proven successful in all types of high school settings. http://www.principals.org/s_nassp/sec_inside.asp?CID=563&DID=48223

National Call for After-School Promising Practices

High schools may add to the national database of after-school promising practices that is maintained by the Academy for Educational Development Center for Youth Development and Policy Research. Submissions are limited to practices that have been in place for a least a year. http://www.afterschool.org/

Conference Calendar

School-to-Career Academy

Ninth Annual Conference June 23-25, 2004

Hilton, Costa Mesa, California

Contact: Lynn Turner, http://www.stc-clearinghouse.com/, 714-327-1064

International Center for Character Education

Character Education Leadership Academy June 25-26, 2004

Joan B. Kroc Institute for Peace & Justice, University of San Diego, California

Contact: C.J. Moloney, icce@sandiego.edu, 619-260-5980

National Parent Teacher Association

108th National Convention June 26-29, 2004 Convention Center, Anaheim, California Contact: 800-307-4782

California Department of Education

California Family Literacy 11th Annual Conference June 30-July 2, 2004 Hyatt Regency at Capitol Park, Sacramento, California Contact: Salvador Arriaga, sarriaga@cde.ca.gov, 916-319-0275

University of California College Prep

Building a Culture of Technology for Teaching and Learning in K-12 July 21-23, 2004 University of California, Santa Cruz, California Contact: Jennifer Guillen, uccp@uccp.org, 866-482-7737

California Teachers Association

Summer Institute July 25-30, 2004 UCLA Conference Center, Los Angeles, California Contact: nodd@cta.org, 650-552-5395

Save the Date!

High Performing High School Summit October 25 & 26, 2004 **Sacramento Convention Center**



Got E-mail?

Join the CDE *High School!* listserv at http://www.cde.ca.gov/ci/gs/hs/hsmail.asp to receive notices about upcoming issues. If you have comments, contributions, or suggestions, please contact Lorraine Jones at <a href="mailto:light: light: light

High School!

Newsletter

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